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(a) Get approval from the appropriate District Manager before decommissioning wells and from the Regional Supervisor before decommissioning platforms and pipelines or other facilities;

(b) Permanently plug all wells;

(c) Remove all platforms and other facilities, except as provided in sections 1725(a) and 1730.

(d) Decommission all pipelines;

(e) Clear the seafloor of all obstructions created by your lease and pipeline right-of-way operations; and

(f) Conduct all decommissioning activities in a manner that is safe, does not unreasonably interfere with other uses of the OCS, and does not cause undue or serious harm or damage to the human, marine, or coastal environment.

[67 FR 35406, May 17, 2002, as amended at 74 FR 19807, Apr. 29, 2009]

§ 250.1704 When must I submit decommissioning applications and reports?

You must submit decommissioning applications and receive approval and submit subsequent reports according to the table in this section.

DECOMMISSIONING APPLICATIONS AND REPORTS TABLE

Decommissioning applications and reports	When to submit	Instructions
(a) Initial platform removal application [not required in the Gulf of Mexico OCS Region].	In the Pacific OCS Region or Alaska OCS Region, submit the application to the Regional Supervisor at least 2 years before production is projected to cease.	Include information required under § 250.1726.
(b) Final removal application for a platform or other facility.	Before removing a platform or other facility in the Gulf of Mexico OCS Region, or not more than 2 years after the submittal of an initial platform removal application to the Pacific OCS Region and the Alaska OCS Region.	Include information required under § 250.1727.
(c) Post-removal report for a platform or other facility.	Within 30 days after you remove a platform or other facility ...	Include information required under § 250.1729.
(d) Pipeline decommissioning application.	Before you decommission a pipeline	Include information required under § 250.1751(a) or § 250.1752(a), as applicable.
(e) Post-pipeline decommissioning report.	Within 30 days after you decommission a pipeline	Include information required under § 250.1753.
(f) Site clearance report for a platform or other facility.	Within 30 days after you complete site clearance verification activities.	Include information required under § 250.1743(b).
(g) Form MMS–124, Application for Permit to Modify (APM). The submission of your APM must be accompanied by payment of the service fee listed in § 250.125.	(1) Before you temporarily abandon or permanently plug a well or zone (2) Within 30 days after you plug a well * * *	Include information required under §§ 250.1712 and 250.1721. Include information required under § 250.1717.
	(3) Before you install a subsea protective device	Refer to § 250.1722(a).
	(4) Within 30 days after you complete a protective device trawl test.	Include information required under § 250.1722(d).
	(5) Before you remove any casing stub or mud line suspension equipment and any subsea protective device.	Refer to § 250.1723.
	(6) Within 30 days after you complete site clearance verification activities.	Include information required under § 250.1743(a).

[67 FR 35406, May 17, 2002; 67 FR 44265, July 1, 2002; 67 FR 66047, Oct. 30, 2002, as amended at 71 FR 40913, July 19, 2006]

PERMANENTLY PLUGGING WELLS

§ 250.1710 When must I permanently plug all wells on a lease?

You must permanently plug all wells on a lease within 1 year after the lease terminates.

§ 250.1711 When will MMS order me to permanently plug a well?

MMS will order you to permanently plug a well if that well:

(a) Poses a hazard to safety or the environment; or

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(b) Is not useful for lease operations and is not capable of oil, gas, or sulphur production in paying quantities.

§250.1712 What information must I submit before I permanently plug a well or zone?

Before you permanently plug a well or zone, you must submit form MMS-124, Application for Permit to Modify, to the appropriate District Manager and receive approval. A request for approval must contain the following information:

- (a) The reason you are plugging the well (or zone), for completions with production amounts specified by the Regional Supervisor, along with substantiating information demonstrating its lack of capacity for further profitable production of oil, gas, or sulfur;
- (b) Recent well test data and pressure data, if available;
- (c) Maximum possible surface pressure, and how it was determined;
- (d) Type and weight of well-control fluid you will use;
- (e) A description of the work;
- (f) A current and proposed well schematic and description that includes:
 - (1) Well depth;
 - (2) All perforated intervals that have not been plugged;
 - (3) Casing and tubing depths and details;
 - (4) Subsurface equipment;
 - (5) Estimated tops of cement (and the basis of the estimate) in each casing annulus;
 - (6) Plug locations;
 - (7) Plug types;
 - (8) Plug lengths;
 - (9) Properties of mud and cement to be used;
 - (10) Perforating and casing cutting plans;
 - (11) Plug testing plans;
 - (12) Casing removal (including information on explosives, if used);
 - (13) Proposed casing removal depth; and

(14) Your plans to protect archaeological and sensitive biological features, including anchor damage during plugging operations, a brief assessment of the environmental impacts of the plugging operations, and the procedures and mitigation measures you will take to minimize such impacts; and

(g) Certification by a Registered Professional Engineer of the well abandonment design and procedures; that there will be at least two independent tested barriers, including one mechanical barrier, across each flow path during abandonment activities; and that the plug meets the requirements in the table in §250.1715. The Registered Professional Engineer must be registered in a State in the United States. You must submit this certification with your APM (Form MMS-124).

[67 FR 35406, May 17, 2002; 67 FR 66048, Oct. 30, 2002, as amended at 75 FR 63376, Oct. 14, 2010]

§250.1713 Must I notify MMS before I begin well plugging operations?

You must notify the appropriate District Manager at least 48 hours before beginning operations to permanently plug a well.

§250.1714 What must I accomplish with well plugs?

You must ensure that all well plugs:

- (a) Provide downhole isolation of hydrocarbon and sulphur zones;
- (b) Protect freshwater aquifers; and
- (c) Prevent migration of formation fluids within the wellbore or to the seafloor.

§250.1715 How must I permanently plug a well?

(a) You must permanently plug wells according to the table in this section. The District Manager may require additional well plugs as necessary.

PERMANENT WELL PLUGGING REQUIREMENTS

If you have—	Then you must use—
(1) Zones in open hole	Cement plug(s) set from at least 100 feet below the bottom to 100 feet above the top of oil, gas, and fresh-water zones to isolate fluids in the strata.